

## Miles Franklin Literary Award 2004 Shortlist

**Elizabeth Costello**

**J. M. Coetzee**

Knoph (Random House)

Elizabeth Costello is an Australian writer of international renown; she is fated, studied, honoured. Famous principally for an early novel that established her reputation and from which, it seems, she will never escape, she has reached the stage, late in life, where her remaining function is to be venerated and applauded. One of a new breed of intellectual nomads, her life has become a series of engagements in sterile conference rooms throughout the world - a private consciousness obliged to reveal itself to a curious public: the presentation of a major award at an American college where she is required to deliver a lecture; a sojourn as the writer in residence on a cruise liner during which she encounters a fellow guest lecturer, an African poet also employed to divert the passengers; a visit to her sister, a missionary in Africa, who is receiving an honorary degree, an occasion which both recognise as the final opportunity for effecting some form of reconciliation; and a disquieting appearance at a writers' conference in Amsterdam where she finds the subject of her talk unexpectedly amongst the audience. She has made her life's work the study of other people yet now it is she who is the object of scrutiny. But, for her, what matters is the continuing search for a means of articulating her vision and the verdict of future generations. Elizabeth Costello is a humane, moral, and uncompromising creation; J. M. Coetzee's latest work of fiction offers us a profound and delicate vision of literary celebrity, artistry and the private life of the mind.

### **About J. M. Coetzee**

J.M. Coetzee's work includes *Dusklands*, *In The Heart Of The Country*, which won the premier South African literary award, the CNA Prize, *Waiting For The Barbarians*, which was awarded the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize, the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and the CNA Prize, *Life And Times Of Michael K*, which won the Booker Prize and the Prix Etranger Femina, *FOE*, *Age Of Iron*, which won the Sunday Express Book of the Year Award, *The Master Of Petersburg*, which won the Irish Times International Fiction Award and the memoir *Boyhood: Scenes From Provincial Life*. His most recent novel, *Disgrace*, won the Booker Prize, making the first author to have won it twice. J M Coetzee was awarded the 2003 Nobel Prize for fiction.

Born in Minlaton, South Australia, in 1951, Peter Goldsworthy divides his time equally between writing and medicine. His novels have sold in excess of 300,000 copies in Australia alone, and have been translated into numerous languages, as have his poetry and short fiction. He has also written for the cinema and is the author of two libretti, including the *Helpman Award* winning *Batavia*. His numerous literary awards include the *Commonwealth Poetry Prize*, an *Australian Bicentennial Literary Award*, and the 2003 *FAW Christina Stead Award* for *Three Dog Night*. He is currently the chair of the Literature Fund of the Australia Council for the Arts and lives in Adelaide.